The Hampden Hippocrat

A Bulletin for the Hampden District of the Massachusetts Medical Society

VOLUME X FALL, 1954 No. 4

MEDICAL ATOMIC ENERGY

A handbook sent through the courtesy of Mr. Edward Boland, Member of Congress, provides reading of considerable interest to physicians. Its title is The Contribution Of Atomic Energy To Medicine, as reported by various scientists associated with atomic research, in a 3 day conference last June before the United States Atomic Energy Commission.

In the seven years since the Commission got underway a totally new chapter has been written on the cause, diagnosis and treatment of disease chiefly because of the radioisotopes which enable us to trace their course and effect through the body. Also they are used to direct lethal rays internally without destroying surrounding tissue, to localize and treat brain tumors which cannot be discovered in any other way and in countless other uses. In fact, one of the most important medical courses given today is at Oak Ridge where physicians are taught the biologic and medical uses of the isotopes and in the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies there is a 30 bed hospital where isotopes which have given hopeful results with animals are used in cancer therapy. But Oak Ridge isn't the only place. There are four centers throughout the country where a special training program is carried out as well as in many of our universities. The fact that every isotope has first to be tested on animals gives an idea of how time consuming and costly this research business is, but on the other hand when there is shown the possibility that radioactive yttrium (I never heard of it either) injected directly into the drainage system of a uterine cancer can destroy any cells seeking to establish a new growth elsewhere, one feels that real progress is being made. In a study of calcium, Dr. Charles Geschickter whose books on bones and tumors are familiar to us all, gives an interesting account of his findings on the relation of calcium to arthritis and bone cancer. In using the isotope Ca45 he discovered that the excess calcium which accumulates in the blood as well as in the knobby joints of the osteoarthritic can be diverted into the bowel by a diet of spinach the oxalic acid of which combines with the calcium. He reports that a group of these cases by eating a large serving of spinach every day with restriction of eggs, milk and cheese, experienced marked improvement of symptoms after a week or two. Of course other combining agents have the same decalcifying effect, but it is particularly interesting to find that spinach which has been crammed down our children's throats is one thing which they should not have, but is distinctly beneficial to the creaky joints of middle age.

Of the long list of isotopes, the one which is used more than all the others combined is isodine not only for the over active thyroid, but in advanced heart disease and the localization of hidden brain tumors. To most of us at the present stage of our experience isotopes mean readioactive iodine.

The conversion of the atom into a tool for the welfare and happiness of the human race is making headway but we don't yet need to carry a Geiger counter on our calls. E. C. D.

Hampden Hippocrat

"Life is short and art is long, the occasion fleeting, experience fallacious and judgment difficult." —Hippocrates, 430 B.C.

This Issue 500 Copies

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WITHIN THE LAW

There is a growing tendency among social agencies, freebooters and quacks to engage illegally in the practice of medicine.

The Massachusetts statutes and rulings of other states are quite explicit on this matter. A corporation, for profit, or otherwise, can not practice medicine, or other professions such as law.

The practice of medicine in this state is defined as the healing art. For this the licensed physician alone qualifies. He may at his risk permit others to assist him, but no other can assume the responsibility, nor can he delegate this responsibility to another. His scope includes all the diagnosis and treatment of sickness, physical or mental and the word therapy is synonymous with the word treatment. Colleges are at fault in teaching students to be part-doctors and in neglecting care of the patient in the pursuit of scientific minutiae.

The purpose of the law is to protect the public, assigning privileges and duties to the medical profession. The public should be protected, violators well-meaning or otherwise, warned and the law rigidly enforced.

With a tip of the hat to the Norfolk Medical News, let us state the Massachusetts Court edict covering this matter, 'learned people . . . . are characterized by the need of unusual learning, the existence of confidential relations, the adherence of a standard of ethics higher than that of the market place, and in a profession like that of medicine, by intimate and delicate personal ministration.

'Traditionally the learned professions were Theology, Law and Medicine, but some other occupations have climbed: Dentistry, a branch of medicine, has done so within modern times. Professional men may be held in a higher ethical code, for example by the restriction of advertising, than men in ordinary business. The rule is generally recognized that a licensed practitioner of a profession may not lawfully practice his profession among the public as a servant of an unlicensed person or a corporation; and that if he does so, an unlicensed person or corporation employing him is guilty of practicing that profession without a license. A corporation as such cannot possess the personal qualities required of a practitioner of a profession. Its servants, though pro-

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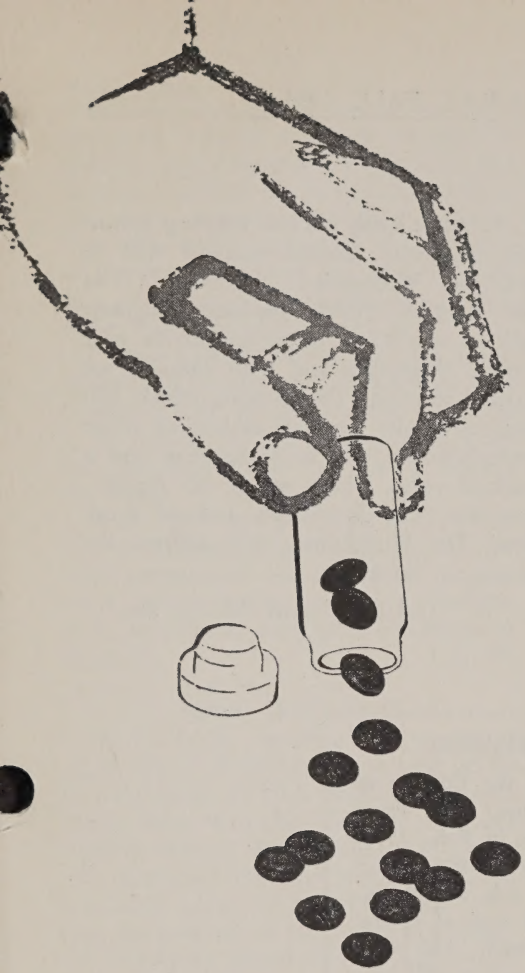

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Mr. L. T. Reed of the Boston office of the Blue Cross will discuss the general practitioners' part in the new chronic disease program of the Blue Cross and will answer any questions on Blue Cross matters.

Physicians interested in attending should call Dr. Diamond at Springfield 4-7614.

P. S. An all day clinical meeting featuring nationally famous speakers will be held on Wednesday, November 17, at the Kimball Hotel. Detailed programs will be sent to all physicians in the near future. Physicians and their families are invited to attend the lectures, which will deal with the general subject of office procedures, as well as a luncheon and a cocktail party. There will be no registration fee. The Academy's national president, Dr. Hildebrand, will address the group at luncheon.

John J. David, M. D., Sec.

MEDICAL READER

It is expected that the History of Springfield's Medicine, 321 years, will be off the press in Feb., 1955. The publishing cost of 500 copies will be $2,000. The sale will probably be very limited and of course will never pay for itself. The winter issue of the Hippocrat will contain a return postal card ordering one of these books at a price of $4.00. The response to this will determine the order to the printer.

W. A. R. Chapin

ESPECIALLY, THEIR SPELLING

(FROM THE CHICAGO DAILY TRIBUNE)

Here's a copy of a three-century-old sign found in a Cornish village. The original is now in the Horniman Museum in London:

ROGER GILES, SURGIN

Skulmaster, Groser and Hundertaker, respectably informs ladys and gentlemen that he drors teef without wateing a minit, and sells vizisks for a penny a peace; Joesharps, penny wissels, fryin-pans and other moozikal Hinstruments, hat grately redoosed figers. As time is cruel bad I begs to tell ee that I also teaches yung ladys and gentlemen their grammur in the purtiest manner and grate care is taken of their morrels and spelling. Halso I sells ginger beer, matches and other pickles such as hepsom salts, hoysters, and winzer sope.

fessionally trained and duly licensed to practice, owe their primary allegiance and obedience to their employer rather than to the client or patients of that employer. The rule stated recognizes the necessity of the immediate and unbroken relationship between a professional man and those who engage his services.

It was applied recently in this Commonwealth in the case of lawyers. The judicial branch of government to which is entrusted the regulation of practice by Attorneys-at-Law has never relaxed the rule'.

What then may be said in justification of extroverts like Henry Kaiser who flout professional ethics, and of corporations who practice medicine through their employees, medically or otherwise trained? J. A. W.

FOOD FORECAST

Dr. C. L. W. Swanson of Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station states that the farms of New England are more fertile today than they were in 1776, and thereby refutes the prophets of gloom who predicted that our teeming millions inevitably must starve when food runs out. As a matter of fact, the copper-colored Nipmucks found the top soil hereabouts not more than three inches deep and not too responsive to their stone hoes. The light sandy character of our New England soil had been proven a ready absorbent for modern fertilizers that are thereby more easily available to hungry plants. This is no place for discussing the pros and cons of chemical vs. barnyard fertilizers. Suffice it to say, the soil does need more humus regularly to renew its usefulness. Vegetables lacking the proper chemicals and vitamins, of course, are conducive to deficits in human economies with consequent impairment of health.

REHABILITATE REHABILITATORS?

The members of the District Society should be briefed on a controversy concerning the Springfield Rehabilitation Centre, Incorporated.

This organization was created with the sanction of the Health Section of the Springfield Community Council of the Community Chest. It was endorsed by the Hampden District Society and the Springfield Academy of Medicine.

In a fine example of community and medical cooperation each organization contributed five members to its Board of Directors. This provided the cooperation and leadership of medical men in a medical project so often urged by the American Medical Association.

Its charter permits coordination of existing facilities in the field of rehabilitation in general and the creation of new services when needed.

Not yet qualified for Community Chest support, grants were received from the Dexter Fund (a fund left by Mrs. Dexter for the aid of non-profit organizations offering public service in the community).

The Dexter Committee receives advice from the Community Council and its clerk is the executive director of the Council.

All officers of the Rehabilitation Centre have been laymen and their primary interest has naturally been organizational and administrative. The Centre has operated harmoniously and efficiently with doctors cooperating as never before.

Then, following a survey by the Center of existing facilities, Community Chest officials with whom we have as yet no official ties, unsuccessfully attempted to restrict our activities. Following this, the Dexter Fund Committee (note association with Community Chest) gave another grant provided we would limit our activities to coordination only. (over)

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Our latest request for a grant from the Dexter Fund augmented by a generally praised report of accomplishments and pressing needs in rehabilitation met with this response: "It is the feeling of the Dexter Fund Committee that any further grant would depend on the carrying out of the general principles of this report. Further, that the Dexter Fund Committee does not propose to recommend annual grants, but might, under the proper circumstances, recommend one further additional grant provided the Springfield Rehabilitation Centre would show that such a grant would help them get on a useful and self-supporting basis." "The directorate, as now set up, is comprised of five members from the Springfield Community Council, five from the Hampden Medical Association, and five from the Springfield Academy of Medicine. This means that two-thirds of the directorate is made up of medical men which appears to be the major bone of contention in regard to the continuance of the body. Most of the agencies in town, and particularly the Community Council, feel that any community project should not be controlled by any one group, whether it be doctors, lawyers, or any other profession, and certainly as now constituted, the control of the Springfield Rehabilitation Center rests chiefly in the hands of the medical profession. Since it is the purpose of the Center to coordinate the various rehabilitation activities in Springfield, it hardly seems possible that this could be done without some control. It also does not seem feasible that control would be assented to, by the various agencies concerned, without representation of each group on the directorate of the Center. Thus, it would seem that the major difficulty lies not in the aims or proposals of the Springfield Rehabilitation Center, but in the fact that they wish to coordinate agencies who will have no voice in the over-all plans. This would seem to be a reasonable objection. It would be my sugestion that before the Dexter Fund makes further contributions to the Springfield Rehabilitation Center that a complete reorganization take place. Equal representation on the directorate should be accorded to all agencies who would necessarily be coordinated and to whatever medical associations are concerned."

This would mean that the many social agencies controlled financially by the Community Chest that might have need of our medical services could dictate policy, or even vote dissolution of the corporation.

Does it not seem strange that doctors at long last awakened to their duties in community health and social medicine should be met with such a reception. Are we unfit to lead in these matters, or is it a fear that we may find that the present social medicine is but the back door entrance to socialized medicine?

Is it not paradoxical that the Community Chest and the Dexter Fund controlling funds intended for the public good have for their many medical problems no medical advisory boards and yet insist that we primaraily a medical organization should be governed by a board of directors preponderantly laymen with little, or no knowledge of what constitutes good medical principle or practice?

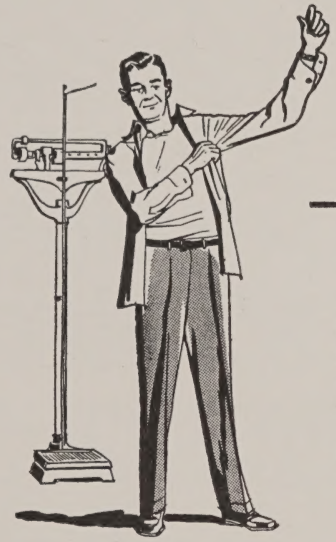
The public has a right to know how its funds are being used. I am sure they will not be suspicious of doctors who are devoting time and study to the Rehabilitation Center in order to provide better medical services for those least able to pay.

In conclusion, we the medical directors of the Springfield Rehabilitation ask the Hampden District Medical Society for a vote of confidence in opposing the proposed change in by-laws in the Springfield Rehabilitation Centre.

The Springfield Academy of Medicine at their last meeting voted such a vote of confidence.

Dieter's Lament

To fight the battle of the bulge
Would appear in vain,
For if you win,
You're sure to lose,
And if you lose you gain!
(Cribbed from and by Chet Struble)



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THOUGHTS FROM A WELFARE CONSULTANT

Dear Hippocrat:

The age of the one horse shay and the paternal family doctor has passed,—the family doctor who took care of all patients who came or called, the family doctor who never sent out bills.

Today the government is the "pater" who takes care of the physical wants of the indigent, - - - call it the "welfare state," if you will. The agencies of Old Age Assistance, Disability Assistance, Aid to Dependent Children and General Relief are designated to furnish financial support and medical assistance to those who cannot pursue a gainful occupation.

The modern doctor is the officer to dispense this medical assistance whether it be in the form of counsel, medicines, glasses, hearing aids or prothesis. In this role he can certainly do more for his patient than his predecessor of the horse and buggy days.

In turn the government expects to pay the doctor for his services. Here is where Commissioner Tompkins, as the representative of the government appears. Last January he presented to the press and later to the medical society, a set of working rules as to how this medical assistance should be controlled—namely the fees to be paid, who should be designated as specialists and incidentally who should be treated as staff patients in our hospitals.

Perhaps you as an individual physician did not like the way this was presented. Perhaps you do not like the fees offered or the designation of your brethren specialists. Perhaps you do not like to be told that your hospital should have a ward service to care for these people gratis. Commissioner Tompkins had to start with some schedule as a working basis, we admit, but let us fervently hope he can sit in with the designated representatives of the Mass. Medical Society and adjust any grievances or misunderstanding, that appear to exist.

It would not appear that 'isolationism' is the answer to this problem as spasmodic instances have cropped up throughout the state. We all realize the enormous cost of present day medical care. We would like all people to be covered with sickness or health insurance but, certainly a fair percentage of our people cannot pay for this. Hence it is either "cooperation" with Mr. Tompkins or some form of health insurance sponsored by the government for those not able to pay.

Yours for Welfare,
A. Franz, Jr.

MEDICAL READER

How To Be Well Though British

Edwards A. Park, one of the elder statesmen of American Pediatrics, has written his personal impressions of the British National Health Service in the August issue of "Pediatrics", and his observations, during a three-month visit to Britain. These should be of interest especially to general practitioners, Pediatricians, and internists.

The G. P. it appears, can earn a satisfactory, if not lordly income, but only by accepting so many patients that he cannot do them all justice. This can only be corrected by decreasing the number of patients carried, and increasing the fee per patient, but this, in turn, will increase the cost of the Service, which already is close to the upper limit of toleration.

The internist and the pediatrician work exclusively in the hospitals, and see no patients outside it. As a result they see

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only the seriously ill cases, while the local physician loses contact with such cases as soon as he decides they require hospitalization. The drawbacks to such an arrangement, whereby neither family doctor nor specialist is able to know the other aspects of the problems of total care, should be obvious to all.

Dr. Park reports that surgery, otology, urology, and other more refined specialties do not face the problem of sharing responsibility for care, since their domain is exclusively the hospital or clinic.

He concludes by noting that in the minds of British physicians, it is no longer a question of whether National Health Service is here to stay—it is now simply a question of how it can be made to work better, for the best interests of both patient and physician. J. A. B.

CONSUMERS PLUS

Figures recently released in Washington by the Public Health Service show an upward trend in the Nation's birthrate. Specifically 1,291,000 babies were born in the first four months of 1954, that is, at the rate of 3,873,000 yearly or 30,000 more than during same trimester of '53. Probably the President based his confidence in the future of the nation on figures such as these, though he could have had little to do personally with the increase other than to stop the carnage in Korea and to encourage industry to keep the wheels turning in the period of adjustment.

Stop for a moment to consider what 3,873,000 new customers yearly will mean to the U. S. economy. First off, that many quarts of milk and also as many oranges will be needed. Not all of the babies will consume an egg a day, but a scrambled million at least is within easy reach. That means grain for the hens and more work for the peddlers. 11,619,000 safety pins are not to be sneezed at, not forgetting 6,000,000 odd prunes and a half million cakes of soap and uncounted containers of cereals, soup, and good old applesauce. Of course there is not enough steel and tin in 11,000,000 safety pins or 3,000,000 cans to have much effect on heavy industry, but 13,555,500 yards of fabric that would go into diapers plus three to five million more in shirts, dresses, socks and such should provide a modest portion for the languishing textile mills. Glass blowers and biochemists; Messrs. Mennen, Mead, Johnson, P. D., Lilly, Lederle, St. Joseph and others without number should take heart.

This panegyric must not be overdone or spun too fine, but the fact remains that figures do not lie even though statisticians are often accused of misapplying them to unwarranted conclusions. Obstetricians and Pediatricians, nevertheless, will rejoice. And then again, tonsils and vermiform appendices needing removal will keep many a practitioner practicing.

Note: There may be a fly in this ointment. The report stated that 'the marriage rate this year has continued the decline that started in 1951. In the first four months, there were 407,000 or 25,000 fewer nuptials than in the same months of 1953, compensated somewhat by a definite trend toward larger families of three and four children.

"It has been a common saying of physicians in England, that a cucumber should be well sliced, and dressed with pepper and vinegar, and then thrown out as good for nothing".

James Boswell
A Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides.

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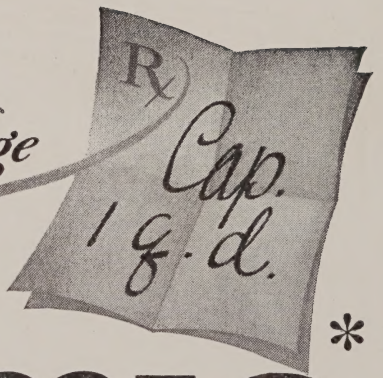

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GOVERNMENT IN MEDICINE

Some of you may recall Secretary Hobby's persuasive T. V. presentation of the Administration's health proposals,— — also the House of Representative's defeat of the controversial re-insurance bill, 238 to 134, after all the arguments were heard, including those of the A.M.A. and the private insurance companies. The stumbling block was the inclusion of a half million professionals who preferred to plan their own retirement programs.

You may also be aware of the critical furor that swept many editorial pages of the country condemning such opposition. The chorus was swelled by a number of labor and veteran officials more mindful of their own political advantage than the good of John Q. public and his family. Feature writers of a number of national magazines have earned fat stipends by castigating the A.M.A. and its practitioners of medicine, the same who have advanced the American brand to world leadership. The Atlantic Monthly attempted to bolster its circulation by printing the carpings of J. Howard Means along with the wheezes of Al Capp, the comic stripper. The depth of obloquy was plumbed when Harper's joined the knockers.

There are signs, however, that the pendulum of criticism has begun the return trip from such extremes. The Trade Union Courier, for instance, published the achievements of American medicine as enumerated by the testimony of Edward J. McCormick, President of A.M.A. The voiciferous veteran recently has been replaced in his responsible office by one more sympathetic to our aspirations. According to the local press, the A.M.A. 'is always under fire from some quarter. Right now it's under attack from the American Legion for its criticism of the Veterans' Administration, and from the Yale Law Journal for having too much authority and for failure to use this authority well. The A.M.A.', continues the Transcript Telegram, 'as usual will go its own way as one of the most powerful craft guilds in the nation'.

Mrs. Colgate Phillips, Secretary of the Women's Auxiliary of the New York State Medical Society has published her refutation, 'I am a doctor's wife who is mad clear through. . . . I have lived with doctors, worked with them, laughed, played and cried with doctors over a period of more than forty years. . . . . I know doctors. They're human — and a finer group of humans I've yet to find. It's about time that someone speaks up in favor of doctors'.

'I am not a doctor's wife', wrote Dorothy W. Patterson, Feature Writer of the Morning Call, 'have no personal interest in the medical profession, and am not on a medical society payroll. I have, however, seen many doctors in action — good ones far more than bad. I have seen them working with the flotsman and jetsam of the city streets, in hospital wards and clinics, giving them the same kind of care they would give to their well-paying private patients, and getting nothing, not even thanks. . . . .

'I have seen (overworked) middle-aged doctors collapse and die . . . . in the line of duty. I have seen them leave young children fatherless . . . and yet my favorite magazine Harper's has joined the galaxy of critics.

To sum up, I am not only weary but considerably angry over the continued and unfair attacks on the medical profession and am appointing myself a committee of one to advocate a moratorium on the "Let's Rake The Doctor Over The Coals" campaign.

Are we downhearted? Neither apparently is the Administration judging from the words of the Big Chief himself. But we surely are grateful to find that the tide has turned. It would be well to remember to do our full duty come November both as regards the health and the solvency of our non-expendable public.

HOT FLASH

Women drivers are involved in only 12% of the total auto accidents in the U. S. Sc. N. L.

MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO

Juvenal the Roman lawyer-satirist had something on the ball when he composed our caption, but he postulated only two sides of the triangle back there at the dawn of the Christian era. The structure is not complete without spirit, the potent third member.

A case in point is provided by a note in the London letter to the New England Journal of July 27, 1954. An English woman, according to Correspondent Lister, gave more credit for her improvement in the health to the preaching of Dr. Billy Graham than to the barbiturates that had been prescribed by her physician. The Evangelist has re-emphasized the importance of the spiritual element in physical well-being for a large number of other listeners thruout the world during recent months and years. Some of his clerical listeners are asking for closer connections between the Church and the medical profession to achieve better therapeusis as though they had never heard of Dr. Richard Cabot and the Emanuel Movement.

Historically when medical men became immersed in scientific details of medical pathology as was the case in the mid-nineteenth century under the spell of Laennec, the great Virchow and the rest, starving souls rallied at the call of Mary Baker Eddy to her simulacrum of science of the spirit for the relief of such errors as human ills. The suffering public rebounded also from the medical barrage of heavy metals to the Osteopathic school of faith healing by placebos and to the therapeutic nihilism of Chiropractic that thrives on human pain and gullibility.

So now again in the mid-twentieth century when medical curricula are so filled with the multiple advances of physiochemistry and electronics, there seems to be no room for cultural studies that broaden the human outlook, and especially for the things of the spirit. Souls once more are hungry. Again the cry goes up —especially in the middle of the night— 'Is there no balm in Giliad? Is there no physician there?'

What can one individual do in the face of the fact that more than half of the youths of the world are taught to believe that religion is only a narcotic to be abhorred? Can one physician himself accomplish anything?

The brightest recent example that comes to mind is furnished by a native of Alsace, a clergyman, philosopher, organist, authority on the life and works of John Sebastian Bach, and currently a physician practicing missionary medicine in Equatorial Africa. Admittedly, few men of the 20th century can hope to rival the good works of Dr. Albert Schweitzer, even in one of his several fields. But the least well-known physician, caught in the treadmill of routine practice, may pause to take stock of his inner motives and those fruits by which he will be judged.

Moments such as this may be organized into a daily program with an oasis of inspiration at the beginning of each week. It will not be necessary to peruse the lives of the Medieval Saints, but he should go to the Good Book and re-read significant passages for help such as the words of Apostle Matthew that apply especially to physicians, 'He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it'. Doubtless the task is difficult, the best things never come easily—,but the achievement of the completed triangle is beyond price. When one good example is added to other thousands, there must be appreciable effect like that of the well-known stone-eroding droplet.

As for me, I have seen the Divine Spirit at work on human lives and I know that it is potent. S. Q. Lapius

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HOT FLASH

Broken ribs and the overlying skin can be just as or more comfortable when pent in a flashy tattersal weskit as in the grip of adhesive plaster according to Prof. P. Lewin (emeritus) of Northwestern. You may need six or eight safety pins for individual fitting (JAMA July 17/54) but the style remains unimpaired. (P.S. an ordinary spotted gravy-toter will do.)

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"A sense of well-being, decrease in irritability, 'improvement in personality' and relief of headache, fatigue and dyspnea" are frequently described by patients.[1]

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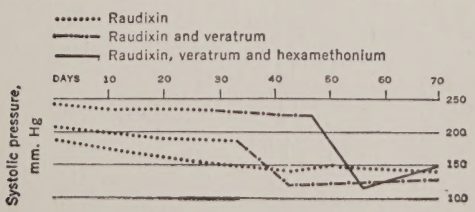
50 and 100 mg. tablets, bottles of 100 and 1000.

Raudixin alone and combined with other hypotensive agents



Raudixin

Squibb rauwolfia

SQUIBB

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The Hampden Hippocrat wishes to add a sprig of laurel to the wreath of Dr. John F. Conlin in commemoration of his splendid service not only to the Massachusetts Medical Society but to the general populace in the New England area. Indeed his fame travelled beyond our borders. Since he was appointed Director of Medical Information and Education, public relations have been much improved. Legislators have been convinced that the efforts of the Massachusetts Medical Society have been directed to the best interest of the public in matters of health regardless of position or circumstance.

His unflagging energy and resourcefulness are reflected in many quarters, notably in our Women's Auxiliary that has been exemplary in assisting the Society on vital issues. He has set a strenuous pace for anyone to follow, with an office adequately equipped with modern facilities and assistants well trained.

In spite of our regret of losing his services, no man can begrudge him the reward of higher compensation and we hope less punishing diversity in his new duties. Hail and farewell John, so say we all with best wishes.

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